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ASSAMESE FOLK- DRAMA TRADITION AND ITS IMPACT ON SOCIALIZATION

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ABSTRACT:

In the academic field of study 'folk' denotes illiterate, backward, uneducated etc. 'Folk' indicate people and 'drama' indicates the presentation of a theme by verbal and physical expression through body language. Drama is a particular art form of limitation of action in the form of action, Folk-drama indicates a particular form of drama grown among the mass people for fulfilling some particular occasion.

Drama has a relation with acting and dancing. It is closely related with folk-knowledge and experience. Early people have to labour hard for their survival and for a comic-relief of their hard labour they took the help of songs and dramas as well as dance and from this a few dramatic form was organized which we term as folk-drama tradition. Assam is very rich in this tradition. In this paper the researcher tries to focus a few folk dramatic tradition of Assam in Analytical Method.



KEYWORDS: Folk-drama tradition, Verbal, Survival, Performance.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The term 'folk-drama' indicates the drama-tradition who have a close relation with the folk-life. Those drama through which folk-life is closely related, or the drama which is composed for the education and learning of the folk to propagate its creation and entertainment. In real sense in the tradition of drama which is coming through verbal-tradition i.e. unwritten and the written tradition of drama is the literary drama. In the 'Natyasastra' of Bharata, two terms of 'loukiki' and "Natyadharmi" has been mentioned, i.e. 'Dharmi ya dwibidha prokta maya purbbang dvijyotomah.

Loukiki Natyadharmicha Toyorbakhami Lakhanama.' (Natyasastra 14/61)

The equivalent words used in the 'Sangeet Ratnakar' to indicate these two types of dramas 'desi' and 'Margi'; Scholar are of the opinion that the idol-worship of the ancient society along with the magical institutions which relates with songs and dances are the main source of creation of folk-drama tradition. Therefore folk-drama may be defined as the systematic story which is being prepared with the constitution of songs, dances and musical instruments.

1.01 Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study is to highlight about the folk drama

tradition of Assam which is closely related with the mass people from the very ancient time. It has a close relation of educating the people as well as entertainment through generation after generation.

1.02 Nature and scope of the study

There are various dramatic, Semi-dramatic performances among the people throughout ages. The author tries to analyze here a selected folk-dramatic tradition beyond the area of research.

1.03 Hypothesis

- Folk-drama has its relation with folk-festival.
- Folk-drama has its relation with folk-religion.

- c. Folk-drama tradition was used to educate the people.
 d. Folk-drama was a means of entertainment of the folk life engaged in agriculture.

1.04 Methods of study:

The prime methods of study of this theme is basically analytical of course, according to the nature of the study sometimes descriptive methods have been followed.

1.05 A review to related literature

In the historical books of Assamese dramatic literature, drama as a literary genre Saitendranath Sarma elaborates about the drama tradition and Dramatic performance of Assam in the historical background. His famous work 'Asomiya Natya Sahitya' (1965), Paramparagata Pachya Natyavinoy (1976) alongwith 'Asomiya Natya Sahityar Jilingoni' (1968) written by Harichandra Bhattacharyya are the some famous historical records about Assamese drama. Satyaprasad Baruah, describes both dramatic tradition as well as dramatic performance in his work 'Natak aru Abhinoy Prasanga' (1962). Another authentic work on Assamese drama was prepared by Atul Chandra Hazarika named 'Manchalekha' (1968). All these books somehow describes about the folk-drama tradition of Assam along with other dramatic performances.

Sailen Bharali prepared 'Natak aru Asomiya Natak' (1990), Jogen Chetia 'Adhunik Natyakala' (1986), Prafulla Kumar Nath has prepared 'Natak, dutiman Alochana' (2009), 'Natak, Prachin aru Adhunik' (2010) Natak; Parampara aru Paribartan (2014) and so on. These book provide some specific information about the theme of folk drama performances of Assam.

1.06 Presentation of the theme

Folk-festivals has a close relation with the creation of the folk-drama. The Greek-drama tradition was born as a result of the pleasure of the agricultural god dynisus for which the people arranged songs and dances. In the same way in Mishor, songs and dances were arranged for the pleasure of the agricultural god Aasirija. In india also people arranged songs and dances to please several gods and goddesses and it is imagined that folk-drama were formed where acting was inseparable part of dramas. Later on, dialogue was connected with it to form a complete design of folk-drama.

The role of folk song, folk dance and folk-musical instruments are significant in folk-drama. Therefore, it is seen that music, dance, musical instruments and acting were very important elements of folk-drama. In this context the remark of a Sanskrit critic is remarkable. He wrote - 'dancing is closely associated through the history of Indian theatre with the drama.' (History of Sanskrit Drama)

In the agriculture based society people wants some amusement after labour in the work-field and as a result folk-drama was formed out of the elements of songs, dances and its performance. Therefore, it may be mentioned that folk-drama is the result of the artistic expression of folk life-experience.

The role of folk-drama tradition can be cited from the birth of Assamese drama, i.e. Ankiya Nat, which is the contribution of Sanskrit drama, Assamese folk-drama tradition as well as the folk-drama tradition of medieval India.

The Ojapali, puppet dance, deodhani dance, kherai dance, Baasi Puran's song, Bhasan Jatra, Kati puja's geet, charak puja's song, Khulia Bhauria, Sukannani Oja, Dhulia bhauria were some traditional folk dramatic performance of Assam, which has been influencing in formation of literary drama in later times.

1.06.1 *The tradition of ojapali had a long past which has been indicated in the gurucharita of seventeenth century.*

*'Ram Ram Guru aru Ramdas ata dui
 Madhave kirtan kare daina pali hui.'*

Ojapali is the combination of songs, dances and acting which is generally performed in context to different puja performance.

1.06.2 The deodhani is an art form which is closely related with religious performance, as well as special puja offerings. It is closely connected with worship of serpent-goddess manasa of the tribal community like pati-rabha, baro and hajong. While worship manasa in the form of maroi, the role of deodhani is very important along with puja. Kumari Puja of Kamakhya, and kherai puja of the borokachari, deodhani dance performance is inseparable part of it.

1.06.3 The kherai performance of the baro has its close relationship with religion. Basically kherai is the combination of different dance form and it is generally organized with a view to 'bathou puja'. It is performed with a view to please the agriculture god siva and both the man as well as women took part in the dances.

1.06.4 One of the ancient dance form of Assam is Devadasi closely related with the temples of ancient Assam. This tradition is associated with lord siva or Vishnu and it was generally performed at the time of 'Arati' with particular songs and dances.

1.06.5 Another traditional dance form is the puppet-dance which is closely related with religion. It generally recited the verses of Ramayana or Mahabharata and express it with special kind of songs and dances. Music and dances, movements and body languages of the puppet generally attracts the hearts of the audience.

1.06.6 Dhulia dance is also one of the ancient dramatic art form and it is the combination of dances, songs, circus and 'Kusti'. Dhulia dance performance prefers the musical instrument like dhol, bhortal, kali, mridanga, bansi (flute), dotara etc. The district of darrang and pati-darrang are rich in this kind of performances.

1.06.7 *Kusan gan and Bhari gan are two dramatic form of the undivided Goalpara district of Assam. In Kushan gan dances, songs, music and dialogues are getting preference, among the twenty kusilava's of this performance. The leader has been identified as 'gital' who conduct the whole performance.*

1.06.8 In bhari gan the performer used mask and its main role played by a bhauria (actor) and a group of performer.

1.06.9 The maroi puja song performed in Goalpara is also a dramatic performance where the theme related with Beula-Lakhindar has been performed with songs and dances.

1.06.10 Another dramatic performance is bansi purana's geet where the same episode of maroi puja has been performed with songs acting and dances.

1.06.11 Bhasan Jatra is closely related with the performance of bhansi puran where the bhatiali section of padma-puran is recited with songs, dialogue and dances by using a particular mask.

1.06.12 *The songs of Kati Puja closely related with women of Goalpara district of Assam is very sensitive where dance, songs, and acting takes place for 'presentation of the union of Lord Siva and Parvati along with the birth kartika'. (The mothers, P. 207)*

1.06.13 Charak Puja, where mask is used and mime-acting is performed Hudum Puja's geet is performed with a view to bring rain to the earth. Dances, songs and acting takes place and it is the sole property of the folk.

1.06.14 Dhulia bhaira and Khulia bhaira are the contribution of music, songs, acting and dances. The performance of dhulia bhauria has similarity with the sutradhara of Ankia Nat.

1.07 Impact on Socialization

The folk-dramatic performance as an art-form of the ancient Assam, has played an important role in socialization. It united the people irrespective of caste and religion and increase the feelings of oneness. The performance gives entertainment to the people and educate them with the teachings of religion and ethics, epics and purans, songs and dances and widen the spirit of greater human society. The folk drama performance played a great role in social change because, it united the people in some special occasions. It also increase the artistic feelings among the people by enjoying the folk dramas. All these performances helps people with new thought and socialization process transforms their mindset with greater consciousness and artistic feelings.

1.08 CONCLUSION

Folk-drama has a close relation with the experiences of folk-life and majority of these were the result of different rituals and worship of agriculture-deity as well as other god and goddess. Importance of songs and dances and dialogue delivery increases the artistic character of the performer and it automatically attracts the people, gives them entertainment, educate them and encourage them for socialization and fight against social evils. These were some positive aspects of folk-drama tradition which influenced the literary drama as creative literature and present trend of drama has been too much influenced by the folk-drama tradition as it has the capacity to attract the people irrespective of caste and religion, riches and poor, villagers and urban people under one sky. This is the success underlying all folk-drama tradition which had a great impact upon humanity socialization social satisfaction, social mobility and also social change.

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